

critical digest

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July 3, 1957, Vol IX No 32 SPECIAL HOLIDAY ISSUE INSERT

This Week

NYC gained one outdoor summer theatre show and lost another. "Theatre Under the Stars" next attraction, following the closing this week-end of Rosalie, will be Cab Calloway and his Cotton Club Revue. Cast of 60 headed by Calloway, Lonnie Sattin, George Kirky and the Norma Miller dancers. Show booked to run through the entire summer... It was announced due to conditions imposed by various unions, George Hamid had canceled his plans to open "Aqua Circus" this week at Flushing Meadows Park Amphitheatre.

Plays

Musical version of Pinero's Trelawny of the Wells to be presented this fall by Jerry Lynn... This is Goggle to be presented by Otto Preminger around Christmas with Bentz Plagmann adapting his own novel.

Players

Elsa Lanchester to star in A Soft Touch due Nov 6... Robert Webber set for lead of Fair Game... Patricia Jessel signed for French Death, play based on French movie "Diabolique"... Elaine Stritch signed for Goldilocks musical by Walter and Jean Kerr... Albert Henderson replaced Mark Allen, Happiest Millionaire... Nicholas Pryor signed for The Egghead.

Playhouses

Alvin Theatre to be redecorated at close of No Time for Sergeants run. New seats and carpeting to be installed.

Tickets

NYC Supreme Court Justice Conlon upheld License Commissioner's ban on sale of more than 10 tickets to unlicensed brokers in denying motion of Sylvia Siegler's Ticket Clubs of NJ, INC, to enjoin enforcement of rule.

London

Titus Andronicus with Laurence Olivier, Vivien Leigh opened at Stoll prior to European tour... Nigel Dennis' The Making of Moo panned by some critics as anti-religious.

Off Broadway

Downtown Theatre, 85 E 4, to continue to present Shaw's In Good King Charles' Golden Days in repertory with its new production of 17th Century Farce, The Beaux Strategem. Shaw play will be presented Sun, Wed, Thur at 8 40, Fri, Sat at 10 30 PM. Beaux Strategem to be presented Sun 2 40, Mon, Tues 8 40, Fri, S at, 7 30 PM.

First attraction booked for new Seven Arts Center, Madison & 30th, is Lust, Mist and Flames by Bown Adams. Adams-Zwerdling to produce it in fall... The Trial of Dimitri Karamazov to be presented by Group Six Productions in fall.

Vaudeville

Jan Weles, Frank Marlowe, Julia Cummings, Michael Chimes head new Palace show. Vaudeville at house is on week-to-week basis. First run films may alternate with film and vaudeville.



OUT
DOOR
MUSICALS

Rosalie, revival of 1928 Romberg-Gershwin musical presented at Central Park's "Theatre Under the Stars" 6/25 drew 1 mild pro vote from Coleman, Mirror, and 6 severe pannings from rest of reviewers. First night performance was postponed due to rain. Coleman admitted musical, presented originally by Ziegfeld with Marilyn Miller and Jack Donahue, shows its age, but he enjoyed the workable book and a pair of songs ("Rosalie" and "In the Still of the Night") that are still likely to send audience home humming. Mimi Benzell, Helen Wood and Henny Youngman headed cast directed by Felix Brentano.

6 other aisle-sitters panned sloppy production as much as they panned what they considered dated musical. Amplification system was not working properly and most of six dissenters admitted they heard little of show. Adding of topical jokes to P. G. Wodehouse book didn't help, noted Gelb, Times. He also blamed lack of rehearsal for minus show. Should have rained on Tuesday too, blistered Kerr, Herald Tribune. News unsigned note labeled proceedings a run-through. To put it conservatively, it was a shambles, added Donnelly, World Telegram & Sun. A few of the reasons he cited were the microphones gravely out of whack, a poorly trained chorus, the music not in time with singers and vice versa, and a dated plot. Manner of production added insult to injury to musical not worth reviving in first place, he concluded. Best thing to be said of it, was free view of NYC skyline, stated McClain, Journal American. Herridge, Post, admitted critics were warned via telegrams that show was suffering mechanical difficulties. But with every allowance for them, show still wasn't worthwhile.

Show Boat- Jones Beach 6/27. 7 rave reviews filed for Guy Lombardo's monster production of the 30 year old Kern-Hammerstein musical. Second annual summer edition had only one major cast change, Andy Devine replacing Paul Hartman as "Captain Andy." All elements of the huge outdoor show supervised by John Kennedy were complimented. Cast of 150 headed by Devine, David Atkinson, Gloria Hamilton, Helena Bliss were cheered, as was dancing staged by Lee Sherman and orchestra conducted by Fred Dvorch. Reviewers also agreed that musical and Jones Beach site were ideally suited. Everything concerning the production is unexpectedly fresh, summed Gelb, Times. It has lost none of its verve or grandiose quality, adds Beckley, Herald Tribune. Show is worth a trip for it is a magnificent show in a magnificent setting, cheered Chapman, News. Revival is one of the wonders of the modern world, raved Coleman, Mirror. It's a veritable Leviathan of an entertainment, he continued. The happiest combination of good songs and good entertainment that anyone has ever brought to the breeze cooled Jones Beach stadium, noted Herridge, Post. Stage director Reginald Hammerstein proves that an outdoor extravaganza is possible and profitable, recent lamentable experiments in Central Park to the contrary, chides McClain, Journal American. Musical itself is just possibly the most expertly confected valentine in the history of the American musical stage, and the current performance takes on something of the ritualistic quality of a national holiday celebration, reports Donnelly, World Telegram & Sun.